voluntary organizations take part. The recommendations of these workshops and seminars also form the basic input for the formulation of the policies.

The majority of suggestions by the NGOs are in the form of mechanism to be worked out for implementation of the provisions of the policy. Certain issues raised by the NGOs that are either outside the ambit of the National Water Policy or are contradictory and represent a minority view such as: defining the rights on water, relaxation of pollution norms for certain activities, pricing of all inputs to agriculture sector, taxing of exports on water intensive crops, application of the recommendation of the Pay Commission regarding improvement of efficiency and accountability of irrigation departments and preferring migration of people from water short areas instead of bringing water to such areas by inter-basin transfer and, as such, are not included in the National Water Policy-2002.

It is also pertinent to point out that the National Water Policy is finally adopted by the National Water Resources Council where all the States and Union Territories are represented and unless the recommendations are acceptable to the NWRC it cannot be incorporated in the Policy.

Flood and irrigation problems of the Southern areas

2514. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of requests made by various quarters to link all the Southern rivers to solve the flood and irrigation problems of the region;

(b) whether Government have come to any conclusion in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons for not making a beginning in this direction to put permanently at rest the flood and irrigation problems of the South?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI): (a) to (d) Central Government continue to get

suggestions and proposals from various quarters for inter-linking of rivers from time to time. The Ministry of Water Resources, then known as the Ministry of Irrigation, however, in 1980, formulated a National Perspective Plan for integrated water resources development through inter-linkages of several Southern based Peninsular rivers and the Himalayan rivers. Through this programme it is intended to assess the surplus basins as of now for possible transfer of water from surplus to deficit basins in order to optimally utilise the water resources of the country. With this purpose, the Government of India has established the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) in 1982 as an autonomous society to carryout water balance and feasibility studies of the Peninsular and Himalayan rivers. In the Peninsular Component (Southern region), 16 links have been taken up for feasibility studies of which 12 links pertain to the inter-linking of the Southern rivers. Feasibility reports for four of the linkages have been completed. Implementation of the water transfer links would only be possible if the concerned to basin States agree to the water linkage proposal and provide other logistical support necessary for project implementation and required funds become available.

Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme

†2515. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme has been formulated by Government with a view to providing immediate irrigation benefits to the farmers in the country;

(b) if so, the outline of the said programme;

(c) the number alongwith the names of the projects for which

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.